

Documents on Diplomacy: Resources

Section VI: A Great Power Emerges *Diplomatic Terms & Historical Events*

Diplomatic & Other Terms

Ambassador The official representative from one country to another. An Ambassador is the highest ranking official assigned to live in a foreign country for an extended period of time. In the United States, an Ambassador is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The title of Ambassador was first used in the United States in 1893. Prior to that, the highest ranking American diplomats were Ministers Plenipotentiary.

Cede: To give something to someone else, such as territorial control, often unwillingly or being forced to do so.

Cession An old spelling of "secession." The act of becoming independent of a country or a government.

Chargé d'Affaires The member of a diplomatic mission who takes charge of an embassy or legation during the temporary absence of its head. The chargé may also be the diplomat who acts as head of a country's lowest-level diplomatic mission that is neither an embassy nor a legation.

Commission A group of representatives or diplomats who are given authority to accomplish a specific task.

Constitution The document written by the Constitutional Convention in 1787 that defines the fundamental principles, laws, structure, functions, and limits of the Federal Government of the United States. It was ratified in 1788 and has been amended just 27 times.

Consul An official appointed by a government to protect its commercial interests and help its citizens in a foreign city.

Corollary A policy statement that results from and relates to a previous policy statement.

Diplomacy The term is used to describe the practice of conducting relations with other nations, such as negotiating treaties, alliances, or agreements.

Diplomat An individual who is appointed by a government to represent its interests and to conduct its relations with another government. An Ambassador is the highest ranking U.S. Department of State diplomatic representative to another nation.

Diplomatic Corps Those engaged in on-going or specific official diplomatic efforts. Included are the Secretary of State, ambassadors, and special envoys to other nations and their staff members who support the work of diplomacy.

Diplomatic Mission An individual or group sent by a government to conduct negotiations or establish relations with another country. A diplomatic mission can be temporary or permanent.

Dispatches Official messages sent with speed between a government and its overseas diplomats or between nations.

Embassy The official headquarters of a government's Ambassador and other representatives to another country. It is usually located in the capitol of the other country. An Embassy is the highest level of diplomatic representation.

Envoy An agent sent by a government or ruler to transact diplomatic business.

Foreign Policy The official views and policies of a government regarding its relations with other nations. In the United States, foreign policy

is developed by the President, with the advice of the Secretary of State and others, and is implemented by the Department of State and any other officials designated by the President.

Imperialism The attempt of one country to dominate another country, especially by political or economic means on a long-term basis; also known as colonialism.

Intervention The act or fact of intentionally becoming involved in a difficult situation to influence domestic policy or bring about regime change.

Legation A diplomatic mission headed by a Minister whose title was "Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary." A legation is the second level of diplomatic representation and is less important than an embassy.

Levy The amount of money paid to a government or organization

Minister Plenipotentiary A diplomat with the authority to represent a head of state but of a lower status than an Ambassador. Until 1893, diplomats who headed American missions overseas only carried the title of Minister Plenipotentiary. The complete title is "Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary."

Negotiate The term refers to discussions between individuals, groups, or nations that are conducted for the purpose of arriving at an agreement on a particular set of terms or actions.

Nonintervention Refusal to take part, especially in a disagreement between countries or within a country.

Perpetuity Forever.

Protocol The system of rules and acceptable behavior used at official ceremonies and occasions. This may also refer to an official international agreement.

Rebellion An attempt to remove a government or a leader by force.

Revolt An attempt to remove the government of a country by its some of its citizens, using force.

Sovereignty The authority of a state to govern itself.

Sphere of Influence A region within which a powerful state claims an exclusive right to intervene.

Statesman An experienced politician, who is respected for making good decisions.

Treaty A formal agreement between two or more countries or states, as in reference to terms of peace or trade and any limitations associated within the agreement.

Important Places, Concepts, and Events

Bolsheviks The political faction that ultimately became the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. They came to power in the 1917 October Revolution.

Boxers: Members of the "Society of Righteous and Harmonious Fists," a conservative, nationalistic group in late 19th and early 20th century China. In 1898, they rose and—supported by Empress Cixi—attempted to expel Westerners and Western influence from China. They were unsuccessful.

Chine The French spelling of "China."

Dollar Diplomacy: A program of President Taft from 1909 to 1913 to use U.S. economic power to further American political aims in Latin America and Asia. The policy was immediately repudiated by his successor, Woodrow Wilson, in 1913.

Forbidden City: The imperial palace of China for 500 years and located in the center of Peking (Beijing.) It was called "Forbidden" because no one could enter or leave without the Emperor's permission.

Great White Fleet The United States fleet sent by President Theodore Roosevelt to circumnavigate the globe from 1907 to 1909.

Imperialism The attempt of one country to try to control another through political or economic methods.

Insurrection An organized attempt by a group of people to overthrow their government or leader, usually by violent means.

Jingoism The extreme belief that your country is always the best. This attitude is often shown in enthusiastic support for war with another country.

Magdalena Bay: A protected bay along the west coast of Mexico. In 1912, Germans attempted to purchase the bay for their use—a move strongly opposed by the United States.

Monroe Doctrine The 1823 policy of President James Monroe warning European powers not to intervene in Western Hemisphere affairs.

Petrograd The Russian city known before—and after—the Soviet era as St. Petersburg. The 1917 October Revolution started in this city.

Platt Amendment A 1901 Amendment to a U.S. Army appropriations bill that defined the terms of U.S. involvement in Cuba. The bill ensured that the United States would have oversight over Cuba's domestic and foreign policy.

Qing Dynasty: Established in 1644 by Manchu invaders, the Qing Dynasty was the last imperial dynasty in China. The last emperor, Puyi, abdicated in February 1912.

Tartar Wall: The most important sector of Western defenses during the Boxer Rebellion. Loss of the Tartar Wall would have meant instant defeat. U.S. Minister Edwin Conger said that the Chinese artillery firing on the legations was worse than anything he had experienced during the Civil War.

Troops of Eight Nations: The combined Western force that relieved the besieged legations in Peking during the Boxer Rebellion. Included troops from Great Britain, the United States, Australia (colonial, operating under British authority), British India, Germany, France, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Japan, and Russian.

Tungli Yamen (Zongli Yamen): The government agency responsible for foreign affairs during the Qing Dynasty. It was founded by Prince Gong in 1861 and replaced with a Foreign Ministry in 1901 after the Boxer Rebellion.

Yellow Journalism Reporting that presents little or no well-researched news and relies on sensational headlines, exaggeration, and scandals.